

## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
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# News Release



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### **Extension of Comment Period on the Proposed Expansion of Upper Ouachita and Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuges**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released a draft Land Protection Plan and accompanying Environmental Assessment (LPP/EA) to link and expand two national wildlife refuges, Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge in Arkansas and Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana on February 22, 2013.

In response to requests received, the Service is extending the comment period on the Draft LPP/EA from March 22, 2013 to April 22, 2013.

The Service will hold an open house during the extended comment period on April 4, 2013, from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the Felsenthal NWR Visitor Center, 5531 Highway 82 West, Crossett, AR, 71635. The public is invited to this open house event to gather information, discuss the proposal, and offer comments. Refuge staff will be available to answer any questions.

The Service is working with the states of Louisiana and Arkansas and a variety of public and private partners to propose expanding the acquisition boundaries. Upper Ouachita NWR is administered from North Louisiana Refuges with a current refuge boundary of 46,594 acres and an approved acquisition boundary of 60,699 acres, and Felsenthal NWR, administered from South Arkansas Refuges, is 65,000 acres. The total number of acres proposed for this landscape expansion includes 31,970 additional acres for Felsenthal NWR and 18,489 additional acres for Upper Ouachita NWR.

If approved, the Service may consider negotiations with **willing sellers only** who express interest in possibly selling their lands to the Service.

The comments, which may be provided through April 22, 2013, give the public a chance to review and comment on three different alternatives. The planning team expects to send the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service a final plan for approval in June 2013. To view and download the Draft LPP/EA, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/ouachitafelsenthal>.

Through April 22, 2013, comments on the Draft LPP/EA may be provided by:

- E-mailing [tina\\_chouinard@fws.gov](mailto:tina_chouinard@fws.gov);
- Mailing to Tina Chouinard, Natural Resource Planner, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 49 Plainsbrook Place, Jackson, TN 38305; or
- Fax to 731/664-1566.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov/](http://www.fws.gov/).

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